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Into the New Year

A NEW year is something to be faced with hope, courage and reasonable enthusiasm. Life would have little meaning if each day were not also something of an adventure in itself. Three hundred and sixty-five fresh days may bring storms and calms, fair winds or foul, but on the whole the new year is not likely to be widely different from 1958 so far as most Canadians are concerned. This nation has its own tasks to perform, its distant goals to reach and a due measure of help to offer to other nations in good will. As for Canada, so with the individual this can be a year of accomplishment if one will have it so.

It will be a year to be lived in a larger Canada with larger problems, some of them the result of economic changes in the world. But Canadians have usually found solutions for their own problems, and there is little reason to suppose that this will be any different now. Beyond what governments and the public purse must achieve, there is the wide field in which individual citizens will be expected to be alert and active first in their own interest and then in that of the nation. It may be a sobering thought, but the year 1959 has all of the appearances of a period in which "medicine and duty" will be the remedy for most public ills, and many private ones as well.

It will be a gain to all if it is realized that initiative and self-help are the time-honored means by which this nation has overcome its difficulties in the past. On the credit side to balance the problems, there is much for which to be thankful. In population and in character this is a steady nation. It is conscious of its freedom, and aims to keep it. It is not chilled by threats from any quarter, and has no need to be. Canadians know that there is a job of work to be done at home, and the need for continued prudence and watchfulness in external relations. Yet, with it all, 1959 can be, and should be for this vigorous young land, a year of opportunity and progress. Under Providence, may it prove so.

B.C. Leads Them All

BY the time this new year of 1959 becomes old, British Columbia almost certainly will have passed the 1,600,000 population mark. On the surface that figure in itself may not appear to be of special significance; but it is. When a total of 1,636,000 is reached—and it may well be before 1959 is out—British Columbia will have multiplied its population by two since the census of 1941.

For a province to double its population in the short space of 18 years is an astonishing achievement. Except during very early periods of pioneer settlement no other province has done so in Canadian history. It is a reflection not only of boom conditions in the exploitation of natural resources but also, and more important for economic stability, of the creation and expansion of manufacturing industries, as evidenced by the heavy increases in urban populations.

British Columbia may well congratulate itself on its spectacular growth, but from the national viewpoint there is cause for some concern. The Dominion's growth lacks the uniformity necessary for the prosperity of all its parts. Only three provinces besides B.C. have experienced a rate of growth appropriate to a relatively new country in a period such as this; they are Ontario, Quebec and Alberta. In the rest population increases have been modest, and in Saskatchewan between 1941 and 1957 the population actually declined by about 15,000.

The industry, population and wealth of Canada therefore are being concentrated more and more into two major geographical regions, the far west and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence. Lopsided development such as this is liable with the passage of time to add to difficulties surrounding relationships among the provinces and between them and the Dominion.

Much in Common

A WASHINGTON news item says that Russia and the United States have undertaken to exchange exhibitions. The U.S. will send a team of workmen with materials and machinery to build one in Moscow next summer; in return Russia will sponsor a Soviet science exhibit in New York. Both governments have signed an agreement to mark the exchange, the first of its kind.

For the introduction of a new calendar year this is a favorable development, small though it may be in light of crucial differences of the cold war. It suggests at least that outside the realm of politics—using this term as representing the militant aspect of foreign affairs—the Western and the Soviet nations can have much in common. Extending this thought, it means that if left to themselves the peoples of both halves of the divided world could get along fairly well.

Co-existence has been reflected in several ways, in spite of the continuing and consuming acerbities of international dispute. Musicians, dancers and athletes of each side have performed to the acclaim of their hosts, indicating that the spirit of hospitality and fair play holds sway among common peoples. Delegations of various kinds have exchanged courtesies without suspicion of insincerity.

On the personal level, therefore, there is no great clash between nations even if populations can be roused easily enough to national protective pitch. The atmosphere differs when it embraces the ruling bodies charged with national interests; here fear, ambition and doubt color the approach to difficult problems. This is probably inescapable because of the great charge in their hands. The more exhibitions are exchanged, nevertheless, the more human beings each side of the curtain become aware of their sameness, the more chance there is of good will seeping upwards to dissipate some of the mistrust that keeps the cold war in being.

Interpreting the News

Fiscal Reform for France

By JOSEPH MACSWEEN
Canadian Press Staff Writer

PREMIER Charles de Gaulle has descended to the market place to preach his message of a glorious future for France.

De Gaulle warned the people that austerity and sacrifice are their only chance of economic salvation. Then in characteristic manner he added:

"But on the other hand if we succeed in the great national enterprise of financial and economic recovery, what great progress on the road that leads France to the heights!"

* * *

De Gaulle used such inspiring words to discuss bleak, brasstack plans for monetary reform, devaluation of the franc, higher taxes, higher prices and stiffer competition for France's industrialists.

De Gaulle's main task when he came to power last June was to restore political stability in a country where governments were toppled with reckless abandon. On a long-run basis, he faced the equally important task of restoring economic stability.

* * *

Both these tasks, of course, are closely linked with the Algerian war and with de Gaulle's plans for large expenditures in that territory to improve the lot of the Moslem population. Sources close to the general believe he considers economic reform in Algeria would go far to settle the Moslem revolt.

France has enjoyed an industrial surge in recent years, but nevertheless suffered a weakening currency under the crushing burden of the Algerian war and a protectionist tariff policy.

Currency specialists have estimated the French price level is 10 to 15 per cent higher than that of its main trade partners, especially those in the tariff-cutting six-nation Common market that goes into official operation on the first of the year.

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Successive French governments shrank from attacking the problem, with its implications of higher taxes and general belt-tightening.

But de Gaulle now is assured of more than ample political strength at home, demonstrated by the constitutional referendum, the legislative elections of November and his personal election to the presidency just over a week ago. He will be inaugurated next month, wielding wide powers that he himself drafted.

"GOING MY WAY ?"

Thinking Aloud

". . . of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—of cabbages and kings."

By TOM TAYLOR

IN Montgomery's memoirs, a Yuletide present I am reading with exceeding interest, the victor of Alamein tells how on Christmas Day, 1942, he ruled that peace and calm should descend on the battlefront so that the troops might enjoy, albeit fleetingly, the festive season.

He skips New Year's, as a friend of mine is currently doing on an air voyage to New Zealand, space travelling being too fast for the clock.

In Monty's eyes, apparently, since he jumps from Christmas of that year to the middle of January, New Year's Day was just another day. Monty, perhaps, was too ascetic.

Today, all the authorities tell us, is by no means just another day, and there will be proof of that pudding in abundance this morning as distinguished Victorians flit from one open house to another. Theirs is a kind of first-footing, but with the noticeable difference they go empty-handed expecting to be provided for when they get there.

The real first-footer, you know, takes some beneficence with him, even if only a lump of coal, although I agree that carrying coal to the Armoury or to Naden would be rather de trop. Anyway they use oil nowadays.

January 1 has been with me all my years but boning up to sound erudite this fresh morn of 1959—how we're climbing up the ladder of the twentieth century!—I am reminded it took a long time before people could agree on what day came after Hogmanay. Not that this really matters, and probably you're not in the mood for a history lesson, but it helps to fill out space.

* * *

Anything of that nature comes as a kind of gift and there's no rule I can think of which absolutely bars one being good to oneself. Nellie McClung, I remember, had a refreshing volume with that title, and probably it has more virtue than ever on a New Year's morn.

But I see there was much argument before January 1 became January 1, as it were. The New Year was bandied about between Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Anglo-Saxons, variously pinned to September or December or March until, for our part, the English-speaking peoples fell in line with others and restored January 1 to the primacy.

Wolfe, I daresay, brought the date with him to Canada, or the staff he left behind did, there to find the Canadiens far ahead of them with the calendar.

If the date has varied, however, the sentiments would always be the same. The opening of a new year, as the poet has it, is like trying to peer into a casket with its gifts unsealed. Everyone has been doing it since the caveman.

And what will be the gifts for 1959? None of us knows in advance, perhaps fortunately. But we hope for the best.

Hope! This is probably the most vital word in the language, for all life is compounded of hope. Everyone hopes for something or other, from day to day and from year to year.

In a way, of course, the enthusiasm with which we greet each New Year, implying as it does we're glad to see the old one out, indicates our discontent. I am afraid we always want more than our deserts warrant.

Anyway, however, I have no mind to quarrel with a universal bent, and so my good wishes go to you all. May in this year of grace 1959 you have peace and fortune in good measure.

I believe if you eat blackeyed peas flavored with salt pork this will bring luck all the year through. The recipe doesn't sound too enticing, but it might propitiate the gods. Try it and let me know sometime.

Gerald Waring

Reports from Ottawa

WHEN the Great Depression hit rock bottom 25 years ago, the United States Congress decided, understandably enough, that it was a good idea to confine government purchasing to goods and materials produced in the U.S.A. The result was what we now know as the "Buy American" Act.

Today the Buy American stands as the major obstacle to the integration of Canadian and American production facilities for the more effective defence of this continent from the danger of Communist aggression.

How can this be? Let us dig into the files of Carriere & MacFeeters Ltd., located on the outskirts of Toronto, and see:

On Dec. 19, 1957, William Dunlop, sales and service manager, wrote the Westinghouse Electric Corporation at Baltimore, Md.:

"Our company is manufacturing a series of voltage sensitive relays on behalf of Canadian Westinghouse . . . on the balanced armature system which we have found improves shock and vibration characteristics considerably . . . Our company, being the design authority, can consider any changes necessary for incorporation in any of your potential applications."

On Jan. 28, 1958, U.S. Westinghouse replied with a brush-off letter saying that "requirements do not exist." But three days later U.S. Westinghouse did a double take on the Canadian product. James H. VanHorne, associate components engineer at Baltimore, wrote:

"We are currently using the precise relay No. A-1005 on your dwg. number 658 except that we require dry circuit contacts . . . We are experiencing difficulty switching the 2.0 MC signal . . . We would be very interested in testing your relays. We would be glad to hear any comments you have on this. We would also appreciate your forwarding complete catalogues on your other relays . . ."

On March 21 Westinghouse engineers presented VanHorne with an evaluation and life test report on Carriere & MacFeeters' relay AH-1006. It had passed evaluation tests with perfect marks. On the "life" side the engineers reported: "To date this relay has completed over 100,000 operations with no noticeable increase in contact resistance."

On March 22 VanHorne wired Dunlop: "Test was successful. Can you supply AH-1006 with printed circuit socket. Please call or write."

Extract from Carriere & MacFeeters' sales report No. 19 dated March 27: "Contacted Mr. VanHorne who . . . was most impressed with our design and in particular the method by which we had overcome the contact resistance problem . . . Apparently the company had conducted several extensive tests of all subminiature relays available in the U.S. with most disappointing results and felt confident that if our relay lived up to our test report as submitted, Westinghouse would purchase this relay for incorporation in their equipment."

Dunlop to VanHorne, April 8: "As promised, during our telephone conversation of Monday, April 7th, please find enclosed 2 samples of our subminiature socket and drawings . . . Should any further details or information be required by your company, you can be assured of our earnest co-operation."

VanHorne to Dunlop, May 8: "Please be advised that we are unable to use your subminiature relays. We have found an American supplier whose relay does an adequate job. It has been decided that we should use an American supplier if at all possible on military equipment."

VanHorne to Dunlop, by phone: Very very sorry—but the Pentagon turned thumbs down on a foreign supplier.

The Packsack

Of GREGORY CLARK

THE HARDEST boarding house to get a room in that I know of is run by a 60-year-old widow who who won't take money alone for her rooms. She wants money plus.

There are seven rooms for rent in the rather old-fashioned house she inherited. And each room has its qualifications. For example, the best room goes for $20 a week and breakfast at 8 a.m. sharp, plus snow shovelling in winter and grass cutting in summer.

Three other rooms go for $17.50 plus breakfast at 7.30 a.m., and the occupant of each has his specified duty. One has to wax and polish all floors on the main floor every third Saturday of the month. Another has to wax and polish all floors on the second floor every fourth Saturday of the month. The third has to put out and take in the ash and garbage cans each collection day, and keep the lawn and back yard tidy at all times.

The other three rooms are small and go for $15 a week and breakfast at 7 a.m., no sooner, no later. One has to do the shopping at the supermarket every Saturday morning; another has to stay in every Wednesday and Sunday night, which are the landlady's nights out; and the third, which is the smallest room, has to repair taps, replace light bulbs, see that the oil tank for the furnace never gets empty or the expansion tank in the attic never runs dry.

The reason the rooms are hard to get is that the roomers all imagine they are living at home.

Fun, Fact and Fiction

The man next door particularly enjoys watching the old movies on TV because George Raft, James Cagney and William Powell are all wearing suits just like his.

* * *

Women of America tell the building industry they want wider front doors. Narrower women might be a less expensive way of getting the same effect.

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A well-known member of a downtown club was at the bar one afternoon trying manfully to down a rising feeling of depression. His efforts were markedly unsuccessful. Each successive drink only managed to unlock a new secret unhappiness. Fellow imbibers paid little heed until the bleary-eyed fellow straightened up, paused and in tones of deepest humility, said "Gentlemen, I am a psychiatric smorgasbord."

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The U.S. Air Force, which talks of putting a small animal into an orbiting satellite and bringing it back alive, hasn't mentioned the species it has in mind. For coming back from just about any place, there's nothing to beat an alley cat.

Storm and Calm

A Year of Surprises

By W. N. EWER

IF I had to sum up in a single word the chief international happenings of the year 1958 the word which I should choose would be "unexpected."

Who last January would have foreseen that December would see a new "Berlin crisis" with Mr. Khrushchev darkly talking of possibilities of war? Who would have foreseen that during the year British and American troops would be sent to Jordan and the Lebanon and then withdrawn? Or that there would be a new "flare-up" over Quemoy or Matsu?

Who for that matter would have expected the setting up of military governments in Burma, Pakistan and the Sudan? Or the end of the Fourth French Republic? Or the dismissal of Bulganin?

* * *

When the year opened we were all thinking of the resumption of high-level talks between the Soviet Union and the Western powers.

There were many preliminary problems — the membership agenda and so on. But when, after a lot of sparring, the "preparatory" talks began in Moscow in April between Mr. Gromyko and the British, American and French ambassadors, the prospects for a summit began to look bright.

Hopes were dashed. At the end of May the three ambassadors gave the Soviet foreign minister a memorandum with suggestions for overcoming the difficulties that had arisen over the agenda. That memorandum has never been answered. Nor did Mr. Gromyko send again for the ambassadors. It became clear that the Soviet government had in fact broken off the preparatory talks and that prospects of a summit meeting had receded into the indefinite future.

But though the Soviet government now seemed disinclined for high-level meetings it seemed quite ready to co-operate in Western proposals for attempts to reach agreement on specific matters, especially in the field of disarmament. It was a promising method.

In June the Soviet government agreed to the holding of a conference of experts to examine the technical requisites for a system of control which would make possible the permanent ending of nuclear weapon tests. In August the experts reached agreement and it was arranged to hold a second-stage conference on the organizational problems of control at the end of October. Meanwhile it had further been agreed to hold in November an expert meeting on safeguards against "surprise attacks." Tension appeared to be definitely decreasing. In Europe particularly all seemed quieter than for a long time past.

* * *

Trouble came in the Middle East and in the Far East. In the Middle East the revolution in Iraq and the tense situation in Jordan and the Lebanon decided the British and American governments to send troops to the latter countries at the request of King Hussein and President Chamoun. The reaction in the other Arab countries and in the Soviet Union was sharp. An ugly situation might have developed. But the UN Assembly took the matter in hand. A pacifying resolution proposed by all the Arab States was adopted unanimously. The withdrawal of the British and American troops followed. The "Middle East crisis" was over.

In the Far East the comparative calm was disturbed when in August, after a lull of some 18 months, the Chinese Communists opened a heavy bombardment of the National "off-shore islands" of Quemoy and hinted that the bombardment might be the prelude to an attack. For some weeks there were fears of a possible armed clash between the United States and the Chinese People's Republic. But talks were started in Warsaw. And though there was no agreement, the bombardment died down. And so did the "Far East crisis."

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So by the end of September the atmosphere everywhere was comparatively calm. The three Western powers thought that the moment was a favorable one for proposing talks on Germany to the Soviet Union. A note was sent to Moscow on September 30. No answer came. But the delay was not unduly disturbing. One looked for the year to end calmly with tension lessened and quiet negotiations probable.

But suddenly and without warning Mr. Khrushchev in a speech in Moscow raised again in the sharpest way the whole question of the status of Berlin. The speech was followed three weeks later by a formal note calling peremptorily for the withdrawal of the Allied troops and the conversion of West Berlin into a "free city."

Mr. Khrushchev had on his own initiative and for no apparent reason created the "Berlin crisis." It was the last and the most unpleasant of the surprises of 1958.